

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of November 14, 2012 Meeting
Public Services Administration Building
Needham, MA

IN ATTENDANCE

TMAC Members: Thomas Stokes, Lt. John Kraemer, Jeffrey MacMann, Tony DelGaizo
Robert Wilson, Glen Schneider, Robert Meltzer, Donna Mullin, Richard Merson, Mark Rosen

Guests: Noah Pearlstein, Dan White, Ron Molter, David Donato, Rob Veich, Susan Getman,
Katherine Fishbone

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was convened at 7:05 PM by Mr. Stokes

I. INTERSECTION, SPEED, SIGNAGE AT HIGHGATE/RYBURY HILLWAY/ARCH STREET

Mr. White presented his concerns about excessive speed of vehicles on Highgate at the intersection of Rybury Hillway/Arch as they approach Greendale. He was particularly interested in exploring alternatives other than a stop sign for fear it would create a more significant problem. In discussion the challenge of placing the speed board on the street (too big), Mr. White reminded the Committee that some speed data had previously been collected. **The Committee passed a motion** to conduct a traffic study (speed and vehicle type) in front of 63 Highgate. These results would be reviewed in conjunction with previous data if available.

II. INTERSECTION AT KENDRICK STREET BRIDGE

Mr. White presented a second issue stating his opposition to current plans for bike lanes planned as part of the new interchange at Kendrick Street and the reconstructed interchange at Highland Avenue. Mr. Merson reported on a very recent meeting with MassDOT who are now planning to revisit the bike routes at both locations. It was suggested the Mr. White attend future public hearings as the design is reconsidered and discussed.

III. SPEED SIGNAGE ON LEXINGTON ST.

Ms. Collins presented her concern on behalf of multiple families on Lexington between Manning and Tower. In addition to the volume of traffic using Lexington as a cut-through to Kendrick St./Newton she was particularly concerned about the tendency of drivers to speed up (“gun it”) on their two block stretch between stop signs. She acknowledged however, that it wasn’t clear if cars were speeding or just accelerating quickly. Her initial interest was in an additional stop sign at Burnside, making it a four-way stop. She was informed that the minimal traffic volume on Burnside would not meet the required warrants for a four way stop. The discussion then turned to possible options to raise awareness of a congested area that would lead to a change in behavior. The group discussed the “green men”, additional advisory signs, increased police presence and a speed board that tells drivers how fast they are going. All of these options were supported by Ms. Collins. As a next step **the Committee passed a motion** to conduct a speed

study between Tower and Manning to determine conclusively if speeding is a problem. Ms. Collins agreed to return to the TMAC and identify a consensus location for the speed board and the speed study tubes.

IV. PARKING ON ROCKWOOD LANE AND RICHARD ROAD.

Mr. Pearlstein presented his concerns about the parking, congestion and lawn destruction on Rockwood Lane and Richard Road due to traffic for Broadmeadow School activity. He also has worries about access by emergency vehicles particularly when cars are parked on both sides of the street. Mr. Pearlstein wanted to discuss the viability of making Rockwood Lane and Richard Road a one-way throughfare and restricting parking to one side of the street. **The Committee passed a motion** recommending that Mr. Pearlstein return with a signed petition from residents establishing a consensus on the parameters of the one way option (which direction, time restrictions) as well as which side of the street (odd or even) would continue to allow parking.

V. CENTRAL AVENUE, SPEED IN FRONT OF WALKER SCHOOL

David Donato and several colleagues came before the TMAC to advocate for traditional “School Zone” signage in front of the Walker School. The school serves children with disabilities and is unique that it is small, private and partially residential which means it is a “24/7/365” operation. Mr. DelGaizo acknowledged that he needed to research the “manual” to review if there are any special regulations associated with this signage (e.g., cross-walk requirement). **The Committee passed a motion** that it will investigate these regulations and report back to the TMAC next month. The motion also included the investigation of a proper location to place a speed board to begin raising driver awareness that extra caution is warranted near the Walker School.

VI. SIGNAGE ON PLEASANT STREET BETWEEN HOWLAND AND DEDHAM AVE.

Ms. Fishbone presented her concern about the volume and speed of traffic on Pleasant Street. The increase in the number of kids coupled with the use of the street as a “cut through” to avoid the light at Dedham and Webster Streets has made the situation more problematic. While she has not yet canvassed the neighbors to solicit their input, she is confident that they will support a petition to install a “Children Playing” sign. The TMAC requested that Ms. Fishbone return next month with the necessary signatures including the owners from the addresses where the signs (each side) will be installed.

VII. INTERSECTION HAWTHORN, WASHINGTON AND BOND STREETS

Mr. Molter discussed the issue of vehicles failing to slow down at the complicated intersection of Hawthorn, Washington and Bond streets. The situation is particularly problematic due to traffic going to the Mitchell School. While there have been no accidents, concerns about this intersection have previously come before the TMAC. A previous traffic study revealed minimal volume and an average speed of 26 MPH which would not warrant a stop sign. However, **the Committee passed a motion** to further examine the intersection for restricted visibility which may allow a stop sign under a newly specified set of warrants.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS.

Mr. Merson briefed the Committee on the Board of Selectmen's' deliberations on the status of Rail Trail bike paths.

Mr. Merson also briefed Tad Staley (Needham Bikes) on the recent discussions with MassDOT and their decision to revisit bike access on the Kendrick Street and Highland Avenue bridges.

Lt. Kraemer presented an application for an all-night parking permit at 180C Linden Street. He expressed concern that its approval might result in additional applications that could further exacerbate traffic problems at the High Rock School. The Committee deferred voting on the approval to first determine if other (handicapped) parking accommodations could be made by the Housing Authority.

The Committee passed several additional motions to:

Table agenda items 1, 2, and 6 until the next meeting
Approve the minutes from the previous meeting.
Adjourn the meeting at 9:02 PM.

Minutes compiled and summarized by Glen Schneider